# AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES U.S. EMBASSY NEW DELHI NEWSLETTER

Summer July-Sept 2016

## American Citizen Services (ACS)

Shantipath Chanakyapuri New Delhi 110 021

Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Tel: 2419-8000

Emergencies after hours and on

weekends: 2419-8000 Fax: 2419-8407

Email: acsnd@state.gov

Useful Links

**U.S.** Embassy Website

Registration and Travel Information

Applying for a Passport or Adding Extra Pages

Consular Reports of Birth Abroad

Obtaining an Immigrant Visa for a Relative or Spouse

Non-Immigrant Visas

Green Cards, Employment
Authorization, and Immigration
Services and Benefits:

Medical and Legal Assistance

Emergency Services for U.S. <u>Citizens</u>

Selective Service System

Social Security Administration

**Internal Revenue Service** 

## 4Th of July on The 2nd

## ACSA presents INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

6:30 PM Onwards
ACSA ball field

Live band, DJ, fireworks, food, beverages, ceremonial event & lots of FUN...

Admission: Rs. 300/- Per Person

For more info: 011 2419 8110 or events@acsaindia.org





#### Meet our *Special* Consular Services Specialist Suresh K. Madan

- University of Delhi Alumni
- Graduate Degree in Business Management
- Joined U.S. Embassy in 1985
- Recipient of State Department Meritorious and Superior Honor Awards
- Born and Raised in New Delhi

Suresh is a 30 year veteran and current Special Consular Services Specialist here at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi. Working in the American Citizen Services (ACS) section in Consular, Suresh mainly deals with critical and emergency cases involving U.S. Citizens in India. Suresh is the main link between India's numerous ministries and the ACS office in New Delhi. With his extensive ACS experience, he works tirelessly to ensure that American citizens in India received the highest possible customer service and that their safety and well-being are properly addressed. The most challenging part of the job Suresh claims is dealing with the massive Indian bureaucratic system. Complex Indian visa categories and requirements make it both hard and stressful to maintain constant relationships with Indian counterparts. Suresh enjoys the work he does immensely, thriving on the stress and demands of the job. He gleefully admits to being "addicted to stress" and enjoys the sense of accomplishment(s) in being able to complete both simple and complex cases. The most common issues U.S. citizens in India deal with Suresh claims are Overstay of Indian visas, property disputes, and court cases. The safety of women has too become a hot topic of recent debate in India. In order to ensure safe travel throughout all of India, Suresh strongly suggests U.S. citizens to keep their travels documents up to date and encourages women to be vigilant of their surroundings and refer to the travel and safety warnings posted on travel.state.gov. Contributed by ACS Summer Hire: Marshall Harrison



FACT SHEET

## Wherever U.S. citizens go, FVAP ensures their voice is heard.

The Federal Voting Assistance (FVAP) works to ensure Service members, their eligible family members and overseas citizens are aware of their right to vote and have the tools and resources to successfully do so - from anywhere in the world.



The Federal Post Card Application (FPCA, SF-76) allows eligible U.S. citizens to apply to register to vote, request an absentee ballot and/or update their contact information with their local election office.

The FPCA is the primary method of communication between you and your election officer. The information you provide on this form is all the local election officer has to determine if you meet the State voter registration requirements, which election materials to send you and where and how to send you a ballot.



## >>> Where to get an FPCA

Online — FVAP.gov offers an online assistant that walks you through completion of the form, and provides a populated fillable PDF. Once completed, do not forget to print and sign the form before submitting it to your local election office.

**Hardcopy** — Hardcopies of the form are available at all military installations and U.S. embassies and consulates worldwide.



## Facts you need to know about the FPCA

- The length of time the ballot request is valid varies by State. To ensure you
  receive an absentee ballot for each election in which you are eligible to vote,
  you should complete a new FPCA annually and with every change of your
  mailing address, or at least 90 days prior to the election you want to vote in.
- The current FPCA was redesigned in 2013 and is incorporated into the online assistant at FVAP.gov. If you only have access to an older hardcopy version, you can still use it. Please refer to the latest State requirements and deadlines at FVAP.gov or in the current Voting Assistance Guide.
- To process your request and provide you a ballot in a timely manner, your election officer may need to contact you for further information or clarification. Be sure to provide contact information (email is preferable for quick communication) in block 5 of the FPCA.
- Block 9 of the FPCA is your opportunity to provide extra information to your election officer to help them determine your residence eligibility or other details necessary to help ensure you receive your ballot.

Looking for more information on completing the FPCA? FVAP.gov has everything that you need, from an online assistant to walk you through the form, to State-specific deadlines and rules.

 Submit your completed FPCA in accordance with your State's laws. Link to your State's submission requirements at our website: FVAP.gov/vao/vag.

## >>> Will my FPCA be processed?



All FPCAs submitted on time and according to State rules will be processed. Here are the most common mistakes to look out for:

- Illegible handwriting. If you prefer to type, you may complete the FPCA form online and print it out.
- No signature. Don't forget to sign and date your completed FPCA before mailing to your local election offi
- Submitted in a manner not in accordance with State law.
- Received after registration or request deadline. Deadlines vary by State.\*

Your local election official is required to contact you if your form is rejected, but states differ in notifying voters of a successful application. We encourage you to contact your local election Official to confirm that your FPCA was successfully processed.

\*Find your State's requirements and contact information for election officials at: FVAP.gov/FPCA

## How and where to submit your FPCA

#### · Double-check for completion and sign

- Look over your completed FPCA to ensure you have provided all the information required by your State, including a complete voting residence address, current mailing address in that State and all other contact information.
- Make sure the information provided is clear and legible.
- Don't forget to sign and date the FPCA.

#### · Submit by email, fax or postal mail

- Check the Voting Assistance Guide at FVAP.gov/vao/vag to determine if your State allows the FPCA to be submitted by either email or fax. Follow the instructions for electronic submission provided.
- Hardcopy FPCAs can be folded and sealed using the form's adhesive edging; online FPCAs printed must be placed in an envelope for mailing.
- If mailing the FPCA through the U.S. Postal Service, APo/FPo or diplomatic pouch, it can be sent postage-paid using the mail indicia available at FVAP.gov. Mailing the FPCA using a foreign country's postal service requires local postage and should have "USA" in the address line of the mailing envelope or folded hardcopy form.

#### · Follow up to check registration status

 You can contact your local election officer to confirm that your FPCA was successfully processed. Find current contact information at FVAP.gov.



#### ConTACT FVAP

Monday—Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Phone: 1-800-438-VOTE (8683) I DSN: 425-1584 I Email: vote@fvap.gov
Go to FVAP.gov and click on "contact" to find where to send your election materials. Media inquiries: media@fvap.gov
Facebook.com/DoDFVAP and Twitter @FVAP

## U.S. Citizen Services New Delhi

The American Citizens Services Unit at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi is open for routine consular services from 8:45 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursdayand Friday excluding holidays. Wednesday mornings from 8:45to 12:00p.m.are now open for Citizen Report of Birth Abroad cases (CRBA). Make your appointment on-line here. To visit the American Citizen Services Unit, please come to Gate 6 of the Embassy (generally known as the "Visa Gate") located on Andre Malraux Marg between Nyaya Marg and Shantipath in the Chanakyapuri neighborhood of New Delhi. Appointments are required for new passports applications, renewal of passports, registration of birth abroad, and notarial services. For general walk in questions you can stop by without an appointment on Thursdays from 3-3:30pm. For *Emergencies* after hours and on weekends call: 011-2419-8000

#### **Upcoming U.S. Embassy Holidays**

July 4 Independence Day (U.S.)

July 6 Idu'l Fitr

August 15 Independence Day (India)

August 18 Raksha Bandhan

Sept. 5 Labor Day

Sept. 12 Id-ul-Zuha (Bakrid)

#### From the Desk of ACS Chief - Greg Floyd

Over the last several months, American Citizen Services (ACS) was host to several groups of trainers coming from our offices in Washington, D.C. The ACS staff was privileged to work directly with a cadre of professionals who updated our computer skills, and gave us "short cuts" for managing the different applications and data bases available to us in performing our jobs. It is amazing to see all the tools available to us in the modern age. But many of you may be wondering, "What happens to the information I give you on my passport application or if you are helping me with another problem?" The answer is that we are directed by law – *The Privacy Act* – to carefully protect your information from disclosure, including within our own government! You might be interested to know that I recently gave a presentation to U.S. law enforcement about why information about ACS customers was protected from them. I told them that the law recognizes that people's trust in our ability to help them overseas is only as strong as the protections we can offer to their information. Like a social worker or other advocate, we want you to feel free to ask for help if you need it, so we get extra privacy protections.

This is consistent with similar Congressional mandates that we safeguard any personally identifiable information (PII) about our customers from disclosure to third persons. Federal employees, in particular my ACS staff, receive training in the Privacy Act and the maintenance and protection of PII. When ACS provides a "service to you" whether it is a passport renewal, Consular Report of Birth Abroad, or an emergency service, we hope you are comfortable that we take our legal duties, and your privacy, very seriously. If you would like more information, try Googling "The Privacy Act," or sending us your questions. And next time when you have a need for our services, please confidently share whatever you think can help us help you.

For those of you who may be looking for "Best Practices" in protecting your own PII, below are some of the suggested sites to help you get started, or strengthen what you have already done, or expand your knowledge about the cutting-edge business and organization practices in identifying and safeguarding PII or preventing identity theft:

- Identifying and Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information (PII) Version 2.0
- Protect Yourself from Identity Theft While Traveling
- Guide to Keeping Your Social Media Accounts Secure

Have a safe and enjoyable summer!

Greg



The Department of Homeland Security plans to launch an online app in the next few weeks for people applying to become U.S. citizens, said DHS Digital Services Executive Director Eric Hysen. As it stands, the process to apply for naturalization can be labor intensive, paper-based and confusing. Hysen said DHS agency has been working on redesigning and digitizing existing documents to make it is easier for the 700,000 people each year who choose to apply for citizenship to get their forms filed and processed. "We've launched online forms before, but for something of this significance, we realized we had to redesign this process from the ground up." He said. To start, the team looked at the current application: Applicants currently can navigate online to a densely written government information page. From there, they can study an eight-page PDF flow chat to determine whether they are eligible for U.S. citizenship, then they have to read 18 pages of instructions before filling out the required N-400 form which is 20 pages long. (Article from FedScoop May 24, 2016)

Read more......<u>DHS launching app for online citizenship</u>

## Independence Day Celebration at the U.S. Embassy, New Delhi Open to all U.S. Citizens

<u>Date</u>: Saturday, July 2, 2016 <u>Time</u>: 6:30 p.m. – onwards. Gates will open at 6:15 p.m. No admittance after 9:00 p.m.

Place: ACSA Ball field (entrance at Gate E, the "ACSA Gate," on Panchsheel Marg across from New Sikkim House, in the Chanakyapuri neighborhood, New Delhi)

**Price: Rs.300** per person (children under 5 admitted for free)

#### **ID Requirements:** Valid U.S. Passport

The program includes fireworks, a live band, DJ, Color Guard, National Anthem presentation, and more! Food and drink coupons are available for purchase at the event.

**Admission Guidelines:** The celebration is open to U.S. citizens and their immediate family" members who are

- Adult American citizen + spouse and children under 18, OR
- Child American citizen + parents and siblings under 18

Each guest must bring a valid U.S. passport (or other Photo ID if non-U.S. citizen parent/spouse/child).

Photo copies of passport or photo ID will not be allowed, *bring original document only*.

Unfortunately, non-U.S. citizen extended family m embers such as cousins, aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc. are not permitted to attend.

**Security Guidelines:** All attendees are subject to full security screening. Small purses or bags for your cell phones/wallets are allowed but they must be thoroughly searched and may delay your entry into the event. Suitcases, umbrellas, coolers, or other large items are banned.

**NO parking on Panchsheel Marg**, you may use Malcha Marg parking for personal driven vehicles.

<u>To RSVP</u>: Please send the following information for each member of your family to <u>events@acsaindia.org</u> no later than Tuesday, June 28, 2016.

- Full Name (Your RSVP name must match the name on your passport)
- Nationality
- Passport number
- If you are not a U.S. citizen, your relationship to the U.S. citizen in your group

<u>Tickets</u>: Tickets may be purchased at the door, but please note all attendees **must RSVP in advance**. Advance tickets are available at the ACSA snack cart in the outside lobby of the U.S. Embassy Consular Section.

(The Consular entrance is Gate 6, also called "Visa Gate", on Andre Malraux Marg, between Nyaya Marg and Shantipath. The snack cart is open Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. To enter **Gate 6**, you must **bring your passport.**)

Questions? Call ACSA Desk 011 -2419 8110 or

E-mail: events@acsaindia.org

www.facebook.com/AmericanCitizenServicesIndia/

### Where is Travel taking you this Summer...

## Renewing U.S. Passports Ahead of Summer Travel

U.S. citizens who will be traveling this summer are strongly encouraged to check their passports (and those of their family members) now to confirm that they have not expired or will not expire soon. Don't let a long-awaited vacation or a move to another country become a nightmare because of an expired passport. Note that some countries require foreigners to have a passport with a validity of at least six months in order to be granted entry to their country; you should check with the Embassy of the country you are traveling to. If your passport has expired or is nearing its expiration date, you should begin the process of applying for a new one immediately in order to beat the summer rush. A passport applied for at the Embassy can take 7 to 10 days to process. For information on renewal procedures, please see link below:

http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/service/passports-birthscitizenship.html

#### **Health Information:**

Information on vaccinations and other health precautions, such as safe food and water precautions and insect bite protection, may be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Tuberculosis (TB) is an increasingly serious health concern in India. For further information, please consult the CDC's information about TB. For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad consult the World Health Organization's (WHO) and the CDC travel notices pages. More health information for travelers is available at http://www.who.int/ith.

#### **Typhoon Season/Monsoon Blues:**

For more information please visit the official Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre in the region which is the India Meteorological Department (IMD), while the Joint Typhoon Warning Center releases unofficial advisories. On average, four to six storms form in this basin every season. For more information please check the IMD home page: http://www.indiaweather.gov.in/?page\_id=281

To learn more on how to best prepare for natural disasters please visit the State Department website at: <a href="http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/emergencies/crisis-support.html">http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/emergencies/crisis-support.html</a>

**Suggestions:** If you have any comments or suggestions about how we can improve our services, please send them to us at: ACSND@state.gov.



Travel SAFE

## **ACSA** presents

## INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

Saturday, July 2, 2016 6:30 PM Onwards

**ACSA Ball Field** 

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Live band, DJ, fireworks, food, beverages, Ceremonial event & lots of FUN!

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